

Amendments to the Drawings:

Figure 10a has been amended to replace reference number 1309 with reference number 130a. Figure 10b has been amended to replace reference number 500 with reference number 502. Figure 12 has been amended to change the leader line for reference number 514.

REMARKS

Reconsideration of the application is requested in view of the above amendments and the following remarks. Claims 1, 5, 8 and 22 have been amended. Claims 4, 37 and 38 have been canceled. Claims 37 and 38 were directed to a non-elected invention. Claim 1 has been amended to include the allowable subject matter of canceled claim 4. Claim 22 (identified as including allowable subject matter) has been amended to include the limitations of base claim 1, and should now be in condition for allowance. New claims 39-49 have been added. The new claims are supported by original claims 1-17, Figures 12-19, and at least the description at pages 20-23 of the present specification. No new matter has been added.

Amendments to the Drawings

Applicants have amended the formal drawings submitted on January 27, 2005, as follows. Figure 10a has been amended to replace reference number 1309 with reference number 130a. Figure 10b has been amended to replace reference number 500 with reference number 502. Figure 12 has been amended to change the leader line for reference number 514.

§ 102 Rejections

Claims 1-3 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Orain (US 3,792,603). Claim 1 was further rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Kralowetz (US 4,461,163). Applicants respectfully traverse these rejections. As discussed above, claim 1 has been amended to include the allowable subject matter of canceled claim 4. Therefore, these rejections are moot. Applicants do not otherwise concede the correctness of these rejections.

New Claims

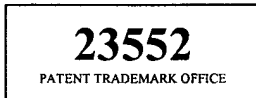
New claims 39-49 have been added. Claim 39 is an independent claim directed to a system for reducing the cross-sectional surface area of a stent assembly. Claim 39 recites a stent contracting assembly that includes a plurality of moveable contracting members, wherein each of the contracting members has an elongate edge with a predetermined shape, and at least one of the contracting members has a different elongate edge predetermined shape than the elongate edge

predetermined shape of each of the other contracting members. The elongate edges of the plurality of contracting members define a contracting chamber.

The prior art of records fails to disclose or suggest every limitation of new claim 39. The Orain and Kralowetz references disclose moveable contracting members that each have the same shape along the edge of the contracting members that define in part the contracting chamber. The prior art of record also fails to disclose or suggest every limitation of dependent claims 40-49. Therefore, Applicants submit that new claims 39-49 are allowable.

In view of the above, Applicants request reconsideration of the application in the form of a Notice of Allowance. If a phone conference would be helpful in resolving any further issues related to this matter, please contact Applicants' attorney listed below at 612-371-5387.

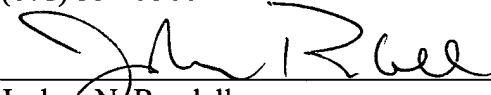
Respectfully submitted,



Date:

April 11, 2006

MERCHANT & GOULD P.C.
P.O. Box 2903
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55402-0903
(612) 332-5300


Joshua N. Randall
Reg. No. 50,719
JNR:ae